



# **WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Legislative Report  
January, 2006**



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# I. RECOMMENDATIONS

The first two meetings of the Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council occurred in Olympia on December 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005 and January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006. This is the first required report to the Legislature regarding its activities and recommendations. The Council is required to report by December 1, but because its first meeting was in December, this report is being sent to the Legislature in January.

At this time, the Council does not have specific legislation to recommend. The Council has adopted a mission statement and a method for advising the Legislature this session about issues of importance to youth.

LYAC members sent a resolution to Senators urging the passage of SB 6536, which would have amended the law establishing the Council, opening participation to younger students and authorizing the Council to continue beyond 2007. With this year's Legislative session ending this week, the Council plans to meet in the spring to form recommendations for the next Legislative Session.

## II. ACTIVITIES

### BACKGROUND

In response to petitions from children and adults seeking a way for youth to be directly involved with legislation that concerns them, the 2005 Legislature passed Senate Bill 5254 establishing a Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC).

The Council is established until June 20, 2007 to examine issues of importance to youth and advise the Legislature on these issues and related legislation. Issues include, but are not limited to: “education, employment, strategies to increase youth participation in state and municipal government, safe environments for youth, substance abuse, emotional and physical health, foster care, poverty, homelessness, and youth access to services on a statewide and municipal basis.”

The twenty-two member council, comprised of students ages fourteen to eighteen, deliberates and advises legislators on issues important to youth in Washington State. SB 5242 outlines the council’s duties as follows:

- a) Advising the Legislature on proposed and pending legislation, including state budget expenditures and policy matters relating to youth;
- b) Advising the standing committees of the Legislature and study commissions, committees and task forces regarding issues relating to youth;
- c) Conducting periodic seminars for its members regarding leadership, government, and the Legislature; and
- d) Reporting annually by December 1 to the Legislature on its activities, including proposed legislation that implements recommendations of the council.

The council may meet between three and six times yearly, and hold up to two public hearings on issues of importance to youth, in addition to its educational seminars for its members. This council is only the third in the United States (similar groups exist in Maine and New Mexico).

## December Meeting

In its first meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> in Olympia, the Council participated in team-building activities, read and analyzed SB 5254, heard from Legislative staff about how the legislative process works, participated in an initial discussion of issues of importance to youth, established rules for governing themselves, and set up systems to advise the legislature on issues they care about.

In the first meeting, the Council formulated its voting and other operating procedures. The Council has selected an interim chairperson, Ms. Katherine Berry from The Overlake School.

A summary from Interim Chair Berry describes one activity:

*“The group worked to answer six key questions to create a brief ‘elevator summary’ of LYAC: Who, What, Where, When, How and Why. Collectively the Council answered the questions as follows:*

**Who:** Students with a voice, involved youth of Washington, spokespeople for youth, civically informed, twenty-two 14 through 18 year olds.

**What:** Give legislators youth points of view, stand-up for the opinions of youth, give youth a voice, bring light to issues of importance, not only to change but to cause,

**Where:** Washington State, Olympia

**When:** Meet 2-6 times a year, set to expire on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2007, submit an annual report to the legislature by December 1.

**How:** Feedback from the youth, educate peers, establish and work towards long term goals, lead by example, “Politics by kids, for kids.”

**Why:** Make a difference for youth in Washington, be the voice that the youth are currently lacking, protect teens, let the legislature know their decisions affect us and our futures, let the youth know the legislators are on their side.”

The Council members wrote and adopted a mission statement to guide their work:

***As the Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council we strive to be a voice for youth, examine issues of importance to Washington youth, and vocalize concerns to legislators. We also work to promote youth participation in state and municipal governments and foster long-lasting relationships between state legislators, adults and young people.***

The council listed issues of importance to youth.

Again, Interim Chair Berry:

“The group then worked to define the *issues* that are important to them and the State’s youth. This list was extensive, including:

- education,
- standardized testing,
- drug enforcement,
- sex education,
- school funding,
- intermediate driver’s licensing,
- funding for driver’s education”

In addition, the Council adopted a process for advising the Legislature and Legislative Committees regarding issues importance to youths:

Council members will work with Legislative and OSPI staff to establish a list of bills they want to track, will seek information from the Legislative website, Legislative staff and other resources for discussion and formulation of official Council positions, and share them with the Legislature.

At the first meeting, Committee members made comments on their progress. Two examples show the tone of these comments (the complete comments are in the appendices of this report):

“Thus far the LYAC has established who we are and what our purpose is. We have also started brainstorming ideas of what to propose or change in today’s public policy to better the lives of Washington State’s youth. I am excited to see where our group will go with our ability to have our voice heard and how the legislature will consider the suggestions we made.”

“I believe that the LYAC’s first meeting was a huge success. We are a diverse group who represent many areas of the State of Washington. LYAC is a great opportunity for youth in our state to voice their opinions, participate in government, and have an effect on our state.”

### **January Meeting**

At their second meeting, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, the Council observed Senate floor debate, reviewed and approved the Legislative report, had more in-depth discussion of issues with Legislative staff and Legislators, created several new documents, and made plans for the future

January 27<sup>th</sup> was the date of floor debate on Senate Bill 2661. The members of the Legislative Youth Council went to the Senate Gallery and watched the debate. Members commented that this was a useful learning experience, seeing both the content of the speeches, and the civility of the floor debate proceedings.

Returning to the Senate Rules Room, the Council members then received briefings from two Legislative staff members working on interest areas previously identified by the Council. Mike Groesch, Coordinator and Fiscal Analyst with the Senate Transportation Committee gave the Council a brief overview of transportation policy and funding, and then answered questions related to traffic safety, intermediate driver's licenses, insurance, and other teen driving issues. Susan Mielke, Coordinator and Counsel with the Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee, gave an overview of education legislation and answered questions regarding the WASL, graduation requirements, and school reform.

The Council was then visited by four members of the Legislature, who talked with them about issues related to their interest areas and the Legislative process. Representative Lovick and Senators Esser, McAuliffe, and Pridemore visited the Council and discussed bills and youth involvement in the Legislature.

Representative Lovick spoke and answered questions about transportation issues, sharing perspectives from his experience in the the State Patrol. Senator Esser spoke of his own experience becoming involved in the Legislature, and the importance of youth voices. Senator McAuliffe talked about education and the WASL, and SB 6618, which would examine the WASL as a graduation requirement. Senator Pridemore spoke about SB 6620, which would remove the WASL as a graduation requirement.

Regarding their role as advisors to the Legislature, Senator Pridemore also specifically challenged the Council members to "let your voice be heard" in this year's Legislative deliberations.

The Council then reviewed and finalized the draft of this report to the Legislature. They discussed what to include and delete, the tone of the report, and made and approved changes by voice vote.

Next, the Council worked to identify an official "Council Opinion" for issues including education, the WASL, and LYAC. Members split into smaller work teams and created documents, including a resolution to the Legislature about this year's LYAC bill, SB 6435, a WASL opinion letter, and a press release describing their work.

The Council also voted to approve Kate Berry as the Chair of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council, discussed next steps, and then adjourned.



# III. APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A:

### LYAC MEMBERS BY TERM AND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

NAME	HOME TOWN	LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
Alexander, Zac	Woodinville	45th
Arnold, James	Longview	19th
Bader, Morgan	Woodinville	45th
Berry, Katherine (Kate)	Woodinville	45th
Best, Tyler (TJ)	Spokane	7th
Brown, Amanda	Yakima	14th
Brummel, Garrett	Olympia	22nd
Dalgleish, Adam	Issaquah	5th
Granado, Brandon	Seattle	26th
Hart, Lila	Marysville	38th
Henderson, Jamica	Seattle	11th
Herrera-Mendoza, Alma	Seattle	37th
Hoge, Andrew	Yakima	14th
Jain, Ankur	Bellevue	41st
Jones, Josh	Vancouver	49th
Jonlin, Alex (honorary)	Seattle	43rd
Kiewert, Shala	Orting	2nd
Lawhead, Leta	Spokane	6th
Leow, Yvonne	Federal Way	30 <sup>th</sup>
Malick, Paras	Kent	33rd
Resch, Marlena (Marley)	Spokane	6th
Swanson, Gretchen	Yakima	14th
Wall, Claudine	Federal Way	30th

## APPENDIX B:

### STUDENT COMMENTS FROM DECEMBER MEETING

The Council members wrote comments in response to a reflection exercise about how they saw the early progress of LYAC in the **December** Meeting:

“I believe that the LYAC’s first meeting was a huge success. We are a diverse group who represent many areas of the State of Washington. LYAC is a great opportunity for youth in our state to voice their opinions, participate in government, and have an effect on our state.”

“So far I think our LYAC meeting has gone great. Everyone here seems to be a good representative for the youth of Washington State. I really think that this is going to be a fantastic youth council who will make a difference for youth in the State of Washington.”

“I think we were so anxious to get started, to make a difference, to really rock this place that we couldn’t stop talking. That excitement will be so valuable to our mission and will enable us to collectively achieve great things for the State of Washington. We’re tackling the hard stuff this weekend and I think we’re doing a heck of a job handling it. The fun is just starting. 22 of us given the means to represent our peers and potentially change Washington... what could be cooler?”

“I found this to be very rewarding. It is great that we are given this opportunity to give the young citizens of Washington State a voice.”

“We are doing pretty good, but I think we have unrealistic expectations of what we are going to do. I think we need to work on informing the youth about topics such as the WASL, so that their reason for not wanting to pass the test is not just because they don’t want to take a test.”

“The meeting is going very well. We are starting to work together as a single unit and I can tell that youth in Washington will not only have a voice, but they will have a strong voice. LYAC is headed for a bright future.”

“Although it as of yet is not functioning, it is exciting to be part of the creation of an organization that I believe will grow in to a nationwide event. We will shape it into the council we want it to become.”

“Thus far the LYAC has established who we are and what our purpose is. We have also started brainstorming ideas of what to propose or change in today’s public policy to better the lives of Washington State’s youth. I am excited to see where our group will go with our ability to have our voice heard and how the legislature will consider the suggestions we made.”

“The meeting thus far has been very productive for the first time this group has been together. All of the members are very opinionated, and have great ideas. We are here to make a difference, and give the youth a voice, and to say it simply, we’re doing just that.”

“Seeing as I’ve just arrived, I don’t know how the meeting has gone thus far. I do know that the other members of this council seem like intelligent, responsible kids and this council has a lot of potential. I look forward to working with all of them.”

“I think this meeting has been fantastic so far! I think that this group is full of great, intelligent, excited teens who are ready to make a difference. I just hope that we all keep our enthusiasm when we are apart from each other and when the real work begins.”

“I think for the first LYAC meeting EVER we have done a marvelous job. None of us (with the exception of Alex) really knew what we were getting into, but after these two short days we can totally tell anyone in an elevator what we are all about. I think our group dynamics are really great – and we will work hard to represent the youth to the Legislature. The meetings have been productive and fast moving. Good job, Greg and Renee. Thank you!”

“The whole shindig has gone abso-bally-lutely marvelously. We’ve identified all the things that we will need to operate as an organization and have begun to pave the way for the future of the LYAC. Whatever it may be, at least now we know what we’re doing. Other than that, it’s freakin’ sweet!”

“I’m enjoying myself. I’m learning a lot about the legislature and bills; interesting. Today I’m looking forward to getting everything done on the agenda especially the big things. Yesterday was a good turn out. In all we have a really good group.”

“As of now, the LYAC has finally held its first meeting. Over the period of about 5 hours we were able to lay the foundation for who we were and what we want to accomplish. While parts of this discovery were tedious, we managed to stay on task and come up with detailed solutions. Yet aside from this accomplishment, our meeting’s greatest success was the quickness of bonding among the members. Within the first hour, I already knew most of the members, their hobbies, and their personality. The friendship we all developed is sure to help make this project a success.”

“The meeting has been great so far. We know for the most part what we do in LYAC and what LYAC does for others. The “5 W’s” definitely helped. We took too long on each subject I think. Maybe next time hurry us through a little bit. Overall I am extremely excited to pursue LYAC, and looking forward to more meetings. I am excited to start making and editing bills.”

## APPENDIX C: Issue Chart from DECEMBER MEETING

### FOCUS QUESTION:

What are practical changes we want to explore and work on this year?

More Options for Health and Fitness	Reform Sex Ed	Standard Test Reform	Education Reform	More Money for Public School	The Future of LYAC	Revise School Environment	Reform Insurance for Youth
More Student Events/School at reasonable price	Revised Sex Ed	Re-examine the WASL's focus/purpose	Better Mental Health Education	More Money for schools.	Communication about LYAC	More /Different Cafeteria Food	Non Discrimination for male drivers!
Planned Physical fitness opportunities for students (i.e. ski trips, camping ect.)	Better Sex Education	Revise the WASL	More Civic Education	Public School Funding	Create Website for LYAC	Later School Starts	Better Insurance policies for youth/ students
		Revise Standardized Testing		Teacher Salary Reforms	LYAC Donation	Safe Place	
		The WASL wastes Money		Influence Educational Funding	Amend the Sunset Clause	International Opportunities	
		Reforming WASL Purpose			Research and receive Funding for LYAC	Anti-Discrimination in After School Activities.	
					Changing our bill.	Discriminatory groups not allowed to use facilities	
					Reform the sunset clause for (LYAC) Funding for LYAC	Increase Student Involvement in Community	

## APPENDIX D: ENACTING LEGISLATION

### CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

#### **SENATE BILL 5254**

59th Legislature  
2005 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate April 18, 2005  
YEAS 34 NAYS 13

\_\_\_\_\_  
**President of the Senate**

Passed by the House April 13, 2005  
YEAS 53 NAYS 43

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Speaker of the House of Representatives**

Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Governor of the State of Washington**

#### CERTIFICATE

I, Thomas Hoemann, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SENATE BILL 5254** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Secretary**

FILED

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**SENATE BILL 5254**

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AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2005 Regular Session

**State of Washington                      59th Legislature                      2005 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Jacobsen, Rasmussen, Franklin, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/19/2005.    Referred to Committee on Government  
Operations & Elections.

1            AN ACT Relating to a legislative youth advisory council; and adding  
2    a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW.

3    BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
5    RCW to read as follows:

6            (1) The legislative youth advisory council is established to  
7    examine issues of importance to youth, including but not limited to  
8    education, employment, strategies to increase youth participation in  
9    state and municipal government, safe environments for youth, substance  
10   abuse, emotional and physical health, foster care, poverty,  
11   homelessness, and youth access to services on a statewide and municipal  
12   basis.

13           (2) The council consists of twenty-two members as provided in this  
14   subsection who, at the time of appointment, are aged fourteen to  
15   eighteen. The council shall select a chair from among its members.

16           (a) Five members shall be selected by each of the two major  
17   caucuses in the senate, appointed by the secretary of the senate.

18           (b) Five members shall be selected by each of the two major

1 caucuses in the house of representatives, appointed by the chief clerk  
2 of the house of representatives.

3 (c) The governor shall appoint two members.

4 (3) Except for initial members, members shall serve two-year terms,  
5 and if eligible, may be reappointed for subsequent two-year terms.  
6 One-half of the initial members shall be appointed to one-year terms,  
7 and these appointments shall be made in such a way as to preserve  
8 overall representation on the committee.

9 (4) The council shall have the following duties:

10 (a) Advising the legislature on proposed and pending legislation,  
11 including state budget expenditures and policy matters relating to  
12 youth;

13 (b) Advising the standing committees of the legislature and study  
14 commissions, committees, and task forces regarding issues relating to  
15 youth;

16 (c) Conducting periodic seminars for its members regarding  
17 leadership, government, and the legislature; and

18 (d) Reporting annually by December 1 to the legislature on its  
19 activities, including proposed legislation that implements  
20 recommendations of the council.

21 (5) In carrying out its duties under subsection (4) of this  
22 section, the council may meet at least three times but not more than  
23 six times per year, including not more than two public hearings on  
24 issues of importance to youth.

25 (6) Members shall be reimbursed as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and  
26 43.03.060.

27 (7) The office of superintendent of public instruction shall  
28 provide administration, coordination, and facilitation assistance to  
29 the council. The senate and house of representatives may provide  
30 policy and fiscal briefings and assistance with drafting proposed  
31 legislation. The senate and the house of representatives shall each  
32 develop internal policies relating to staff assistance provided to the  
33 council. Such policies may include applicable internal personnel and  
34 practices guidelines, resource use and expense reimbursement  
35 guidelines, and applicable ethics mandates. Provision of funds,  
36 resources, and staff, as well as the assignment and direction of staff,  
37 remains at all times within the sole discretion of the chamber making  
38 the provision.

1       (8) The office of superintendent of public instruction, the  
2 legislature, any agency of the legislature, and any official or  
3 employee of such office or agency are immune from liability for any  
4 injury that is incurred by or caused by a member of the youth advisory  
5 council and that occurs while the member of the council is performing  
6 duties of the council or is otherwise engaged in activities or  
7 receiving services for which reimbursement is allowed under subsection  
8 (6) of this section. The immunity provided by this subsection does not  
9 apply to an injury intentionally caused by the act or omission of an  
10 employee or official of the superintendent of public instruction or the  
11 legislature or any agency of the legislature.  
12       (9) This section expires June 30, 2007.

--- END ---



## APPENDIX E: FINAL BILL REPORT, SB 5254

### FINAL BILL REPORT SB 5254

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#### C 355 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Creating the legislative youth advisory council.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen, Rasmussen, Franklin, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

**Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections**

**House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability**

**Background:** Approximately three hundred children and adults have petitioned the legislature to provide a way for youth to be directly involved with legislation that concerns them.

**Summary:** A legislative youth advisory council is established until June 30, 2007 to examine issues important to youth and advise the legislature on these issues and related legislation.

The council has twenty-two members between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Each of the two major caucuses in the Senate and House of Representatives appoints five of the members, and the Governor appoints two. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction administers the council. The Senate and the House may provide briefings and help with drafting legislation and must adopt policies about providing staff assistance, resources, and funding.

The council can meet between three and six times a year, hold up to two public hearings, and conduct educational seminars for its members. It must report annually on its activities and any recommendations for legislation.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	41	7	
House	53	43	(House amended)
Senate	34	13	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 24, 2005